

Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible
Introductions to John 4, 5, and 6

Chapter 4

It was, more than any thing else, the glory of the land of Israel, that it was Emmanuel's land (Isa. 8:8), not only the place of his birth, but the scene of his preaching and miracles. This land in our Saviour's time was divided into three parts: Judea in the south, Galilee in the north, and Samaria lying between them. Now, in this chapter, we have Christ in each of these three parts of that land. I. Departing out of Judea (v. 1-3). II. Passing through Samaria, which, though a visit in transitu, here takes up most room. 1. His coming into Samaria (v. 4-6). 2. His discourse with the Samaritan woman at a well (v. 7-26). 3. The notice which the woman gave of him to the city (v. 27-30). 4. Christ's talk with his disciples in the meantime (v. 31-38). 5. The good effect of this among the Samaritans (v. 39-42). III. We find him residing for some time in Galilee (v. 43-46), and his curing a nobleman's son there, that was at death's door (v. 46-54).

Chapter 5

We have in the gospels a faithful record of all that Jesus began both to do and to teach, Acts 1:1. These two are interwoven, because what he taught explained what he did, and what he did confirmed what he taught. Accordingly, we have in this chapter a miracle and a sermon. I. The miracle was the cure of an impotent man that had been diseased thirty-eight years, with the circumstances of that cure (v. 1-16). II. The sermon was Christ's vindication of himself before the sanhedrim, when he was prosecuted as a criminal for healing the man on the sabbath day, in which, 1. He asserts his authority as Messiah, and Mediator between God and man (v. 17-29). 2. He proves it by the testimony of his Father, of John Baptist, of his miracles, and of the scriptures of the Old Testament, and condemns the Jews for their unbelief (v. 30-47).

Chapter 6

In this chapter we have, I. The miracle of the loaves (v. 1-14). II. Christ's walking upon the water (v. 15-21). III. The people's flocking after him to Capernaum (v. 22-25). IV. His conference with them, occasioned by the miracle of the loaves, in which he reproves them for seeking carnal food, and directs them to spiritual food (v. 26, 27), showing them how they must labour for spiritual food (v. 28, 29), and what that spiritual food is (v. 30-59). V. Their discontent at what he said, and the reproof he gave them for it (v. 60-65). VI. The apostasy of many from him, and his discourse with his disciples that adhered to him upon that occasion (v. 66-71).